



NEWS RELEASE

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HUDGENS: USE CAUTION WITH SPARKLERS; ALL OTHER FIREWORKS STILL ILLEGAL IN GEORGIA

Atlanta – While sparklers and similar non-explosive fireworks devices are legal in Georgia, Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner Ralph Hudgens is urging citizens to use extreme caution to avoid injuries when using legalized fireworks during the Fourth of July holiday.

“Even legal fireworks should only be used with close adult supervision,” Hudgens said. “For the sake of safety and seeing a spectacular display, your best bet is to attend a professional show.”

Consumers may be confused when they discover certain types of fireworks on sale at local retail outlets near our State’s borders, Hudgens said. Sparklers and fountains are not classified as fireworks by law and are legal and available for sale or use in Georgia.

The law states that the definition of prohibited fireworks shall *not* include: “Wire or wood sparklers of 100 grams or less of mixture per item; other sparkling items which are non-explosive and nonaerial and contain 75 grams or less of chemical compound per tube or a total of 200 grams or less for multiple tubes; snake and glow worms; trick noise makers which include paper streamers, party poppers, string poppers, snappers, and drop pops each consisting of 0.25 grains or less of explosive mixture.”

The Commissioner said sparklers can burn at temperatures as high as 1800 degrees, and must be used properly and with adult supervision.

“Around 8,000 people are treated in hospital emergency rooms every year for fireworks-related injuries,” Hudgens said, “and most of those incidents involve children.”

He added that in a typical year, two-thirds to three-fourths of all fireworks injuries occur during the four-week period surrounding Independence Day. On the Fourth of July itself, fireworks usually start more fires nationwide than all other causes combined.

The sale and use of most consumer types of fireworks, including firecrackers, skyrockets, and cherry bombs, is still illegal in Georgia and punishable by a maximum fine of up to \$1,000 and up to one year in jail.